

**20<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE  
CALIFORNIA LEMON LAW**

**REMARKS BY  
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STATE AND CONSUMER SERVICES AGENCY**

**STATE CAPITOL  
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA  
JUNE 19, 2002**

Today is an important celebration for consumers everywhere, for we not only celebrate one of the most important advances in consumer protection during the last two decades – the California Lemon Law – but we also celebrate the pioneers and the heroes of the consumer movement who made this law possible.

- One such hero is Sally Tanner, who was at the forefront of this issue and whose law served as a model for the rest of the nation. She moved the 1982 Lemon Law through the Legislature despite considerable pressure from the auto industry.
- Another hero is Kathleen Hamilton, who first worked on this issue as a consumer advocate and then later as a member of Sally's staff. Her commitment to this law and to so many other important consumer issues made her the perfect choice to head the Department of Consumer Affairs.
- A remarkable hero is Rosemary Shahan, the founder of Consumers for Auto Reliability and Safety. She is a person who never gives up. She is a person who brings hope to others. She is a person who has worked with countless victims of lemons, with the sensitivity of one who herself experienced a lemon. She has helped ensure that our system – the Legislature and the Press -- listen to the voices of these victims. She has devoted her life to this issue, and everyone of us here knows that her efforts will continue to keep us, as a state, at the forefront of lemon laws.
- We also celebrate the consumer advocacy groups, such as CARS, CalPIRG, and Consumers Union, whose tenacious lobbying efforts have made such a difference.

But let us remember that the true unsung heroes are the people who have come forward all these years to tell their stories.

- Some paid the ultimate price, losing loved ones.
- Some have been badly injured.
- Many have been thrown into financial hardship as a result of the failures of the lemons that they purchased and repaired... and repaired.... and repaired....

It is their stories, it is their suffering, it is their courage in coming forward that we celebrate today and that made the Lemon Law possible.

I would like to take a moment to read the following Proclamation from our Consumer-Advocate-In-Chief, Governor Gray Davis.

“WHEREAS, Lemon Laws for new vehicles are widely recognized as one of the most important advances in consumer protection; and

WHEREAS, California's Lemon Law provides recourse for consumers who buy or lease defective new vehicles, such as cars, trucks, minivans, and sports utility vehicles; and

WHEREAS, since 1982, the Lemon Law has made it possible for California consumers to return lemon vehicles worth an estimated \$1 billion to manufacturers; and

WHEREAS, 15 manufacturers, representing approximately two-thirds of the new vehicles sold or leased in California, offer arbitration programs that are certified by the California Arbitration Certification Program; and

WHEREAS, on June 19, 2002, California's Arbitration Certification Program will host a reception to mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of California's Lemon Law.

NOW, THEREFORE I, GRAY DAVIS, Governor of the State of California, do hereby proclaim June 19, 2002 as "Lemon Law Celebration Day."

Under the Governor's leadership, California's Lemon Law continues to be strengthened. The Governor has signed two major new lemon law bills to enhance consumer protection. One such bill, sponsored by Byron Sher, allows cars to be branded as "lemons" after just 2 failed repair attempts, instead of four.

Thank you, one and all, for your efforts to protect consumers. Keep up the good work.